

## **FELASA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Ljubljana, 17 June 2017**

### **President's Annual report 2016**

2016 was the year of the 13<sup>th</sup> FELASA Congress. The Brussel's Congress was jointly organized with BCLAS (the Belgian Council for Laboratory Animal Science), NVP (the Dutch Society for Laboratory Animal Science) and BV (the Dutch Society for Animal Technology). Despite the terrorist attack in March 2016, the congress attracted 1750 participants. They came from 53 countries and from all continents. The scientific programme was structured in six main 'Streams' and counted 76 sessions, workshops, and meetings, 199 speakers and 240 posters. The sessions and workshops were very well attended with very good presentations and discussions on the implementation of the Directive 2010/63, severity assessment, culture of care, open opinion, scientific methods, and many other topics. The programme really had the fingers on the pulse as this was clearly indicated by the lots of discussions going on in the corridors and the exhibition area after the sessions. The longer coffee breaks of 45 min. increased networking face-to-face, which gave the Congress a special spirit. FELASA, ICLAS European Regional Committee (ICLAS ERC), and Laboratory Animals Ltd sponsored nine scholarships for young European laboratory animal scientists presenting an abstract at the FELASA Congress. During the Congress the EC had a meeting together with Ann Turner, the Executive Director of AALAS to deepen the discussion regarding the AALAS-FELASA Liaison Body. Many organisations took the opportunity to meet during the congress. FELASA and the organising associations got feedback that the scientific programme was high level and there were many supportive comments about the overall organisation including security, and technical support for the sessions. The exhibition was attended very well too despite high room temperature. There was also feedback where improvements could be made and which will be considered for the next congress. All in all it was an inspiring happening, as well as a successful and financially healthy conference. I congratulate our colleagues from BCLAS, NVP, and BV on this excellent scientific congress and for the impressive work they did. Many thanks as well to all the members of the organising and scientific committee, the chairs, all the speakers, the people behind the scenes, and all participants who really made this congress a success.

Every three years at its congress, FELASA recognises with its Award a defined piece of original scientific work on any aspect of laboratory animal science, housing, husbandry or welfare that could lead or has led to changes or improvements into how animals are utilized in research, testing or education within Europe and that is consistent with FELASA's aims and objectives. Dr Bryan Howard received the FELASA Award 2016, at a platform session during the FELASA 2016 Congress. The title of his award lecture was "Education, training and learning – some personal reflections". The Award Panel recognises the outstanding achievements of Dr Bryan Howard within the field of laboratory animal science and his extraordinary dedication to the well-being of animals used in research. Many thanks go to PLEXX for sponsoring the FELASA Award 2016 and for the commitment to support Laboratory Animal Sciences and welfare of animals.

The "spring" board meeting was held June 12, 2016 just before the Congress in Brussels, Belgium, hosted by BCLAS. The "autumn" meeting took place in Bucharest, Romania, November 12, 2016, hosted by ARSAL in conjunction with ARSAL's symposium 2016. During that meeting, the BoM discussed the EC's proposal on "Future FELASA Congresses and FELASA Professionalization" and voted for a long term financial strategy to become independent of the financial outcome of the congresses over time by implementing an annual increase in membership fee 2017-2025 of 0.50 EUR per member and year (with evaluation of this strategy in 2020). Ann-Christine Eklöf, Vice-President Working Groups gave an overview of the working groups over the last 6 years.

In 2016, there were ongoing activities at the European level. FELASA continued its dialogue with the Commission and acted as a conduit for information from national associations. In preparation of the review of Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes the EU Commission sent a questionnaire to European stakeholder organisations interested in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. FELASA collected the information from its member associations and sent the filled questionnaire to the EU Commission. Two documents were signed by FELASA together with other European organisations: Update of the "Statement supporting European Directive 2010/63/EU ("Directive") on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes" and a "Call for Action: For world-leading, innovative and responsible medical research in Europe". FELASA has been actively involved in a number of international associations, namely: AALAS, AAALAC, EARA, ELSA, EPAA, ICLAS, and LAL.

During the year FELASA was represented at several meetings either in person or electronically:

- Observer sessions of the National Contact Points organized by the Commission in Brussels,
- Meeting on 'Feasibility study criteria' for article 10 requirement on second generation purpose bred non-human primates under Directive 2010/63/EU on the use of animals for scientific purposes", 24. June 2016, Brussels,
- Meeting of the Board of Trustees of AAALAC International, 8. April and 25. September 2016,
- EPAA Steering Committee and Mirror Group meeting 29. September 2016,
- 67<sup>th</sup> National AALAS meeting, 30. October – 3. November 2016, Charlotte, USA,
- Commission conference "Non Animal Approaches - the way forward" of 6-7 December 2016, Brussels,
- Meetings of the European Life Science Alliance (ELSA),
- Meetings of the Task force of FELASA/EFPIA/ESLAV to review key aspects of implementation of Directive 2010/63/EU with the objective of providing good practice guidance for end-users,
- Meetings of Education & Training Platform for Laboratory Animal Science (ETPLAS).

Information about current and past working groups can be found on FELASA's web page ([www.felasa.eu](http://www.felasa.eu)). In 2016 a new FELASA-AALAS working group on Health Monitoring for Fish in Research was established.

The Accreditation Board for Education and Training (E&T Board) met twice face to face and held six teleconferences. There had been an increase in the annual and certificate fees. In addition to the usual work of assessing and discussing new applications, accredited courses annual reports and re-applications for expired accreditations, and course audits, other work had also been undertaken. These included the review of two ETPLAS documents, the updating of the E&T accreditation Paper and various sessions had been organized for the FELASA congress. The E&T Board had also organized a workshop entitled "Should Accrediting Bodies Collaborate?" with the cost of the room hire sponsored by SGV and hold its traditional meeting with the course organizers. There had been requests received from South Africa and Brazil asking for help and advice with setting up accreditation schemes. These were prompted by the wish of people to be able to travel and work in Europe and demonstrates the value of FELASA accreditation.

A number of changes within the Executive Committee were announced at the end of the past year. Ann-Christine Eklöf reached the final of her third term as Vice-President Working groups and couldn't be re-elected. On behalf of FELASA EC, the Board of Management (BoM), and personally many thanks to Ann-Christine for her support of FELASA as Board Member and VP Working Groups for over 15 years. Martina Dorsch followed her in the function as VP Working Groups in January 2017. Based on the BoM decision during the last Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Brussels FELASA reverted back to separating the duties of "International" and "European Affairs" (as it was between 2004 and 2014) and a direct link was created between the Vice-President Education and Training and the Education and Training Accreditation Board by electing the chair of the E&T Board, to this position. The (new) functions started 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017:

- Belén Pintado – Vice-President International Affairs,
- David Smith – Vice-President European Affairs,
- Marcel Gyger – Vice-President Education and Training.

After my last year as President of FELASA I would like to thank all EC members for their enormous support, Penny Alborough for the excellent Secretariat support at all times as well as the Board of Management, the Accreditation Board for Education and Training, all working group members and other volunteers for their contributions to the well-being and growth of FELASA, and the great support and confidence during my Presidency.

I wish the new FELASA President, Hanna-Marja Voipio, good luck and lots of success.

HEINZ BRANDSTETTER  
Past-President  
FELASA  
May 2017